



*June 9, 2017*

## ***Facts About...***

### **Amendments to the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP) under COMAR 11.14.08**

*A joint action of Maryland Department of Transportation/Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT/MVA) and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)*

#### **Purpose of this Action**

The purpose of these amendments is to modernize and greatly enhance the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP) to improve motorist convenience while minimizing the impact on air quality. The amendments make a few key changes: delaying the initial VEIP test date and exempting pre-on board diagnostics (OBD) light duty vehicles. These common sense enhancements improve customer service, and allow Marylanders to benefit from the significant air quality progress in Maryland.

The amendments delay the initial VEIP inspection for new vehicles by one year. Currently, new vehicles undergo a VEIP test at two years of age. The amendments change the initial VEIP inspection date to at least 36 months after the vehicle's model year.

The amendments also exempt pre-1996 model year light duty vehicles (cars and light trucks) from VEIP inspections. The OBD test is conducted on 1996 and newer light duty vehicles and 2008 and newer medium-heavy duty vehicles. The idle test and gas cap leak test will continue to be conducted on older and heavier vehicles.

#### **Submission to EPA as Revision to Maryland's SIP**

These amendments will be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a revision to Maryland's State Implementation Plan.

## **Background**

VEIP has been a cornerstone air quality program in Maryland for three decades. Several key programs and advancements in technology have resulted in much cleaner air in Maryland since VEIP began in 1984. These improvements in air quality allow Maryland to move forward with the current customer service enhancements to the VEIP.

There have been several advancements in vehicle technology since the VEIP program started. New vehicle emission standards have grown dramatically more stringent and vehicles now maintain the lower emissions levels over a longer period of time. VEIP testing methods have also grown more advanced. Computerized OBD testing is now possible on the vast majority of vehicles in Maryland. This type of testing is much more thorough, while much less complicated to perform than older test types.

Additionally, other key programs in Maryland have resulted in substantial improvements in air quality. Maryland has implemented aggressive pollution controls on Maryland power plants, cars and trucks, and many other sources. These controls have been very effective towards attaining and maintaining air quality standards. Maryland currently complies with the fine particulate standard statewide and is extremely close to meeting the new ozone standard that will begin to be implemented in the next year. There are also other emerging opportunities to further clean the air with electric vehicles, other “Zero Emission Vehicles” and other technological advances on emission controls for many other mobile sources.

## **Sources Affected**

Approximately 1.6 million vehicles are inspected in the VEIP annually. In 2018, it is expected that the initial inspection would be delayed by one year for approximately 209,000 new vehicles, and a similar number in future years. An estimated 24,000 pre-1996 light duty vehicles would become exempt in 2018 as the first step toward implementing OBD-only testing. These vehicles are now over 20 years old and retiring from the vehicle population at a rapid rate.

## **Emissions**

The amendment to delay the initial inspection for new vehicles by one year is expected to result in a negligible increase in emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) (0.01 tons per day (tpd)) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) (0.02 tpd). Exempting pre-1996 light duty vehicles would have no effect on NO<sub>x</sub> emissions and result in an increase of 0.93 tpd of VOC, which would quickly decrease to negligible over future years.

In comparison, the Tier 3 Low Sulfur Fuel program, in the 2015 to 2020 timeframe, will result in NOx reductions of 14 tpd in Maryland, while 9 tpd of NOx reductions are being achieved through the 2015 NOx regulations for coal-fired power plants. Similarly, Maryland's new consumer products (2017) and clean paint (2016) regulations are expected to reduce VOC emissions by 8.3 tpd.

The U.S. EPA supports the proposed amendments.

#### **Economic Impact on Affected Sources, the Department, other State Agencies, Local Government, other Industries or Trade Groups, the Public**

These enhancements will provide on-going economic benefits to the public by reducing the amount of inspection fees paid. The economic benefit to the public for fiscal year 2018 (January 1, 2018 start date) is an estimated \$2,250,000. MDOT/MVA will experience a loss of revenue of about \$2,160,000 because of the fee reductions. Cost savings to the public and loss in revenues to MDOT/MVA would continue thereafter under this regulation change. The proposed action is not expected to have significant economic impact on any other entity, including MDE.

#### **Economic Impact on Small Businesses**

The proposed action would have minimal economic impact on small businesses that are vehicle repair facilities due to potentially fewer vehicles requiring repairs.